

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1505

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA PRIORITY

AMCONSUL ASMARA PRIORITY

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY JIDDA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L KHARTOUM 1065

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS

SUBJ: CISCO II - TRAVEL OF LEN CAMPBELL AND BRITISH JOURNALISTS

REF: LONDON 05694; ADDIS ABABA 4459

1. DISCUSSED ENTIRE PLF HOSTAGE ISSUE WITH BRITISH AMBASSADOR PHILLIPS EARLY APRIL 14. HE STATED BRITISH IN BEIRUT HAVE BEEN IN TELEPHONE TOUCH WITH PLF TYPE MOHAMED ALI WHO ISSUED RANSOM STATEMENT CARRIED BY AP (BEIRUT 3182). BRITISH HERE HAVE CHECKED WITH PUBLIC SECURITY WHO STATE THERE ARE TWO MOHAMED ALIS IN ERITREAN MOVEMENT (ONE IS MOHAMED ALI AFARORA; THIRD NAME OF OTHER UNKNOWN), BUT NEITHER IS AUTHORIZED SPOKESMAN FOR PLF MILITARY INSIDE ERITREA. BRITISH HERE WERE URGED TO HAVE NOTHING FURTHER TO DO WITH HIM.

2. RE TRAVEL LEN CAMPBELL AND BRITISH JOURNALISTS, PHILLIPS SAID HE UNDERSTOOD PARTY PLANNING LEAVE LONDON FOR KHARTOUM APRIL 22. I SAID ROBERTS AND DOWNEY HAD SUGGESTED VIA EMBASSY LONDON THAT WE INTERVENE INFORMALLY HERE TO EXPEDITE ISSUANCE OF THEIR VISAS. SINCE TWO MEN
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ARE BRITISH JOURNALISTS, IT SEEMED PREFERABLE IF THIS ACTION

UNDERTAKEN BY BRITISH HERE. PHILLIPS AGREED. WHILE PROPOSED VISIT MIGHT NOT ACCOMPLISH MUCH, HE CONCURRED THAT IT COULD DO NO HARM AND MIGHT EVEN BE HELPFUL SINCE ROBERTS IS EVIDENTLY PERSONA GRATA WITH MEMBERS ERITREAN GUERRILLA MOVEMENT. PHILLIPS SAID HE HAD JUST HAD MESSAGE FROM LONDON ASKING FOR HIS VIEWS ON PROPOSED VISIT. WHILE HE REMAINED SKEPTICAL WHAT COULD BE ACCOMPLISHED, HE WOULD NOW ASK FOREIGN OFFICE FOR AUTHORIZATION TO SUPPORT WITH SUDANESE HERE VISA REQUESTS OF ROBERTS AND DOWNEY AS JOURNALISTS.

3. COMMENT. IT UNCLEAR HERE WHETHER SUDANESE EMBASSY LONDON WILL BE MADE FULLY AWARE THAT ROBERTS AND DOWNEY ARE TRAVELLING IN CONNECTION CAMPBELL HOSTAGE CASE. WE DO NOT BELIEVE ANY EFFORT SHOULD BE MADE HIDE THIS FACT FROM SUDANESE. IF SUDANESE WERE TO REGARD SUCH A VISIT AS STRONGLY COUNTERPRODUCTIVE IT WOULD PROBABLY ROCK BOAT LESS IF THIS WERE CLEAR PRIOR TO GROUP'S ARRIVAL KHARTOUM.

4. SEPTTEL DEALS WITH QUESTION OF VISAS FOR CAMPBELLS. BREWER

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